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UNCLAS ABUJA 002508

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: ECON ETRD EAGR ENRG EFIN PREL KPAO NI UNCSD

SUBJECT: NIGERIA: PRESIDENT OBASANJO TO HEAD WSSD

DELEGATION

REF: A. A) STATE 151258

B. B) STATE 158974

¶11. (SBU) Summary. The Nigerian delegation to the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSD) will be led by President Obasanjo and include Ministers for Foreign Affairs, Agriculture, Environment, Finance, African Integration and Energy (Presidential Advisor Rilwanu Lukman). Nigerian contacts in the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Environment received reftel talking points and agreed on the need for the WSSD to limit itself to concrete programs with a chance for implementation and eventual success. While Nigerian actions at international fora are hard to predict, for the WSSD the present delegation seems well disposed to a high degree of cooperation. End Summary.

¶12. (U) President Olusegun Obasanjo, recently criticized for his foreign travels, may limit his attendance to September 2 only, when he is scheduled to give the 47th presentation to the WSSD. According to Director of the 2nd UN office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, M.K. Ibrahim, Obasanjo personally reduced the size of the Nigerian delegation from 102 to thirty and many of the offices were in a state of confusion.

¶13. (U) Minister of State for Environmental Affairs Imeh Okopido responded to the demarche by stressing Nigeria's agreement with the U.S. on the importance of partnerships, and relayed his gratitude for USG support for the African Process (Reftel b).

¶14. (U) Participation by Lukman shows the GON is taking the energy portion of the agenda seriously. Contacts at both the Ministry of the Environment and MFA said they expected to work closely with the U.S. and that Nigeria shared many of our concerns.

¶15. (SBU) Comment: In recent international fora the degree of Nigerian cooperation has varied. Positive WTO meetings in Doha were followed by a less collaboration in Monterrey. Nevertheless, we believe that working-level and senior members of the WSSD delegation are open to greater cooperation with the U.S., and with a little luck might be kept from reverting to obstructionist positions, whether they be those of the G-77 or OPEC. End Comment.

JETER